Wildlife Letters

WILEY

Wildlife Letters

FORUM OPEN ACCESS

Community Camera Trapping: A Novel Method for Encouraging Human–Big Cat Coexistence on Human-Dominated Land

Amy Dickman[1,2] | Alayne Cotterill[1,2] | Stephano Asecheka[2] | Zainabu Mlaponi[2] | Huruma Mbugi[2] | Ana Grau[2] | Wiston Mtandamo[2] | Gabriel Nyausi[2] | BenJee Cascio[2]

[1]Wildlife Conservation Research Unit, Department of Biology, Recanati-Kaplan Centre, University of Oxford, Tubney, UK | [2]Lion Landscapes, Highcliffe, Teignmouth, Devon, UK

Correspondence: Amy Dickman (amy.dickman@biology.ox.ac.uk)

Received: 15 October 2024 | **Revised:** 15 January 2025 | **Accepted:** 29 January 2025

Funding: A.D. is funded by a the Kaplan Senior Research Fellowship in Wild Cat Conservation. We have lots of smaller donors for the fieldwork but none of them funded the time for writing up the work.

Keywords: behavior change | big cats | CCT | CCT+ | coexistence | conservation | human–wildlife conflict

ABSTRACT

Human–wildlife conflict (HWC) poses a significant threat to both human livelihoods and conservation, particularly for large, potentially dangerous species such as big cats. Here, we provide an overview of community camera trapping (CCT) and the expanded community camera-trapping plus (CCT+) programs, which are innovative, inclusive approaches that can help reduce conflict and improve coexistence. We illustrate how CCT, through a combination of participatory monitoring and tangible benefits directly linked to wildlife presence, helps create initial changes in attitude and tolerance towards big cats and other wildlife. CCT+ builds on this by introducing additional incentives and disincentives that promote conservation-friendly behavior change, leading to tangible improvements in coexistence. We explain the approaches, highlight key aspects for practitioners to consider, and discuss the potential to scale these approaches to strengthen human–wildlife coexistence across diverse contexts.

1 | Introduction

Coexistence between humans and large carnivores often comes at a significant cost for local communities. Living alongside species like big cats incurs direct costs, such as attacks on livestock and even people; indirect costs, such as having to invest in strengthening livestock enclosures; and opportunity costs, such as fear of walking to school or carrying out other activities that could alleviate poverty (Inskip and Zimmermann 2009; Dickman 2010; Loveridge et al. 2010). These negative experiences often lead to retaliatory killings and wildlife persecution, posing a considerable threat to vulnerable species (Khorozyan and Waltert 2021; Loveridge et al. 2010; Woodroffe and Frank 2005). Many conservation programs focus their efforts on reducing the direct costs of conflict, such as through fences, strengthening enclosures, using human guardians or guarding animals, or deterrents (Khorozyan and Waltert 2021; Cavalcanti et al. 2012; Lichtenfeld et al. 2015; Marker 2000). But reducing the costs of coexisting with big cats is not enough: for long-term conservation, wildlife presence must generate tangible, recognized benefits to local people that outweigh the remaining costs (IUCN 2023). Importantly, those benefits need to be co-developed with local communities; directly linked to the presence of big cats and their prey; incentivize positive conservation behavior; and actively disincentivize actions that threaten these species. Though this sounds challenging, the two programs outlined here demonstrate one

Summary

Practitioner Points

- Community camera-trapping (CCT) programs, through participatory monitoring and tangible benefits, can effectively improve attitudes and tolerance towards wildlife, while the expanded "CCT+" strengthens this, incorporating incentives and disincentives to drive conservation-positive behavior change.
- The combined approach results in tangible positive outcomes, including reduced livestock depredation and conflict, increased community engagement in conservation, and greater awareness of wildlife-related benefits.
- Notwithstanding the challenges and important considerations, CCT and CCT+ are innovative, scalable, and impactful approaches for improving human–wildlife coexistence.

way of moving toward that goal in an inclusive and participatory way.

2 | Overview of the Community Camera Trapping (CCT) Program

2.1 | Origin

Like many projects tackling human–wildlife conflict (HWC), we at Lion Landscapes (LL) focused for several years on reducing direct conflict and providing community benefits, primarily around community priorities of education, healthcare, and veterinary medicine. However, the benefits were associated with the project rather than wildlife, so they did not create significant conservation incentives. At the same time, we were camera-trapping on village land and our camera-traps were being stolen, partly because of a lack of community inclusion and trust. To deal with both issues, we worked with local communities to co-develop the "community camera-trapping" (CCT) initiative, originally on village land around Ruaha National Park in Tanzania, though it has now been expanded elsewhere (Figure 1). Under this program, villagers were responsible for the camera-traps, decided their placement, and generated points for each wild animal they photographed (excluding small mammals, small birds, etc.). These points then translated into priority community benefits, as described below.

2.2 | Mechanism

Potential villages for inclusion were selected based primarily on HWC levels, particularly where past data showed they had high conflict. These tended to be adjacent to protected areas and had relatively high levels of wildlife presence. Village leaders were approached with the overall concept and were asked if they would be interested. We only had one incident of a village that did not want to participate, in Rufiji, Selous. This was due to a lack of familiarity with wildlife conservation projects, strong distrust in outsider groups due to a recent heavy handed poaching operation, and fear of camera traps as a tool to detect and prosecute poachers. We held several meetings with the community and after their refusal we engaged the neighboring village instead. After 6 months the initial village requested that we implement the program in their area, which we agreed to do.

Community involvement was crucial throughout the process, in identifying needs and monitoring progress. After establishing the core idea above—that images would generate points which translated into benefits—we held community meetings to discuss specifics such as the number of points generated by each sighting. As we wanted to incentivize the conservation of more threatened and more conflict-causing species, more points were allocated to those species (Figure 2a). Species which occurred in large groups were slightly downgraded, so a single sighting of a group (such as a troop of baboons) would not be "worth" more than maintaining a diverse number of solitary species (Figure 2b). To disincentivize snaring and increase local benefits from research, animals with snare injuries received zero points, while animals wearing a research collar generated double points.

Another key discussion point in the community meetings was the kinds of benefits that these points would translate to. It was agreed that benefits had to remain within the ability of the conservation project to help deliver (so large-scale initiatives such as transforming irrigation systems were excluded), and had to tangibly benefit the wider community, including traditionally marginalized groups, as equitably as possible. Villagers selected the core priority areas as healthcare, education, and veterinary benefits, which were felt to offer valuable benefits to diverse groups, including pastoralists, farmers, youth, and women. It was agreed that benefits would be split equally between these three priority areas. Villagers then made specific requests under those wider themes: for example, healthcare benefits tended to focus on enrollment in rural government health insurance; veterinary health support often included antiparasitic treatments; and schools requested basic materials, sporting equipment, and support for school lunches. Relevant local government officials and other authorities were included closely in delivering these benefits.

Villages interested in the program were grouped into groups of four, which were matched as closely as possible on aspects such as village size, distance to the Park, likely wildlife densities, and so forth. Villages therefore competed against each other within the groups. This was originally done so we could have a set monthly budget for the program, but proved valuable in generating a competitive spirit between villages. Each village was allocated camera-traps, and two local people per village were employed part-time as CCT officers to place and monitor the camera-traps. Camera-traps could not be placed within 1 km of each other or the village boundary (to avoid conflict regarding "whose" wildlife was photographed) and could not be moved more than once a month. Each month the images were downloaded and the points calculated, communicated to the village, and transparently displayed in the village, as well as their position in the CCT "league." Every 3 months, we held a celebration in the winning village and publicly distributed benefits to each village (Figure 2c). The village with the most points received US$2000 worth of benefits, the second US$1500, the third US$1000, and the fourth US$500, to ensure that all villages

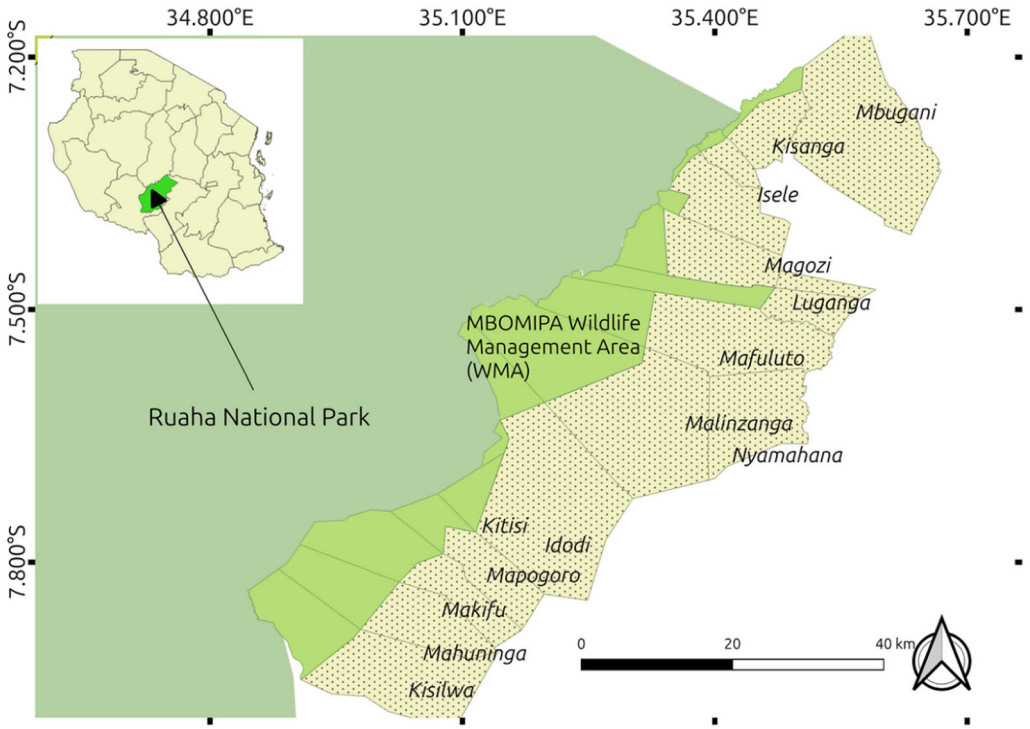

FIGURE 1 | Map of village land close to Ruaha National Park in Tanzania, where the community camera-trapping program was first developed.

(a)

Species	No. points per individual
Small mammal (< lesser kudu)	1000
Conflict-causing primate	1500
Larger mammal (≥ lesser kudu)	2000
Lion, leopard, cheetah, spotted hyaena	15,000
African wild dog	20,000

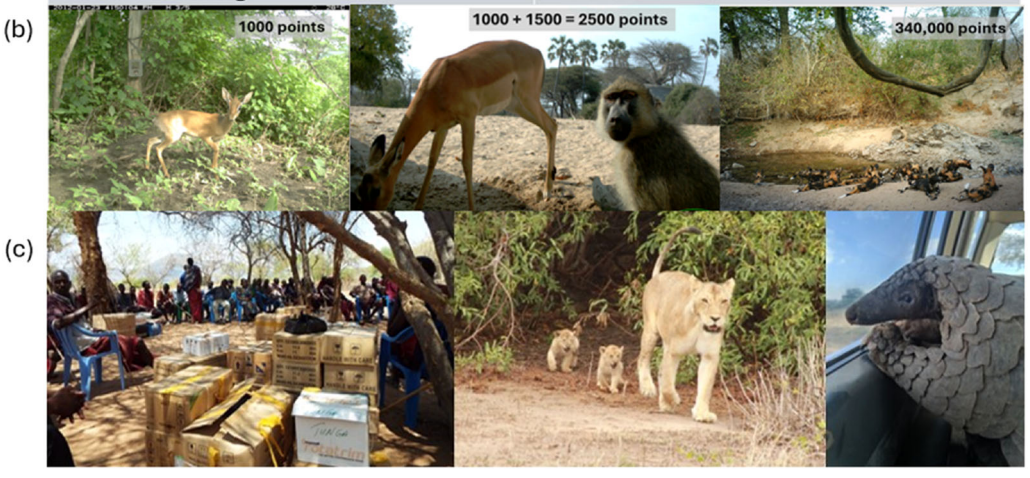

FIGURE 2 | (a) Examples of points generated per animal camera-trapped; (b) examples of points generated per image; and (c) benefit distribution and images of wildlife tolerated on village land as a result of engagement in CCT.

benefited to some extent. After the quarterly celebration, the points reset to zero and the cycle restarted.

Despite the groupings, some villages originally had higher wildlife densities than others due to ecological factors. This meant that some villages benefited more than others: Amongst 12 villages participating during the 2 years from October 2020, 4 finished first or second almost every round, while 2 villages never finished first or second. However, the aim is not for each village to receive the same level of benefit—villages with more wildlife are likely to bear more costs, so the point of CCT was to ensure that such villages also gain more

benefits. The development of CCT+ (see below) was a mechanism to expand this by additionally rewarding conservation-friendly community behaviors.

The co-development and establishment of CCT was a transformational step in our community conservation work. It demonstrated that wildlife presence could directly lead to tangible community benefits and had substantial positive conservation benefits, as described below.

3 | Evolution Into the Community Camera Trapping Plus (CCT+) Program

3.1 | Origin

CCT proved a highly successful program and remains an extremely useful foundational step in building positive attitudes and tolerance towards wildlife. However, one of the risks in the CCT structure is that if all villages in a group maintain relatively little wildlife, then the top three villages in that poorly performing group could still end up with more rewards than the lowest-scoring village in a high-performing group. Furthermore, because the benefits were at the community level, there was still a substantial risk that individuals would partake in behaviors such as poisoning and snaring, which would be unlikely to significantly change wildlife detection at the level picked up by the camera-traps, but which could have a devastating impact on one or more species. For example, one poisoned carcass could kill a significant number of vultures and lions (*Panthera leo*). Additionally, we wanted villages to play an active role in conservation by encouraging positive conservation activities. Therefore, in certain village groups we co-developed CCT into a wider conservation agreement, which we called "community camera-trapping plus" (CCT+).

3.2 | Mechanism

The enhanced CCT+ program (Figure 3) built upon the positive attitudes and tolerance fostered by CCT and introduced additional elements to drive behavior change and active participation in conflict mitigation. In this model camera-trapping still generates points, but the village concerned also earns additional benefits from agreed conservation-friendly behaviors that protect local livelihoods and/or reduce key threats to wildlife, such as building predator-proof livestock enclosures to reduce conflict. However, it also includes disincentives for behaviors agreed with the community to harm conservation or exacerbate conflict, such as leaving livestock unattended or laying out snares or poison. Central to the program is a written conservation agreement, which is co-developed with the village and outlines all expectations, and the mechanism for choosing and distributing the benefits. This agreement is formatted so that the community would always receive some benefits, and there is a maximum cap on the benefits that could be earned so it can be budgeted for. The level of benefits earned and lost is reviewed monthly and benefits are distributed every 3 months.

Methods for assessing each metric were discussed at community meetings and often used auxiliary community staff paid for by Lion Landscapes. For example, Lion Landscapes had auxiliary staff opportunistically collect data on snare presence during existing community patrols, but also scheduled "snare sweeps" whereby a member of LL staff conducted a random sweep of village land. Similarly, community liaisons collected data on poisoning events, enclosure fortifications, and other metrics that were key under the relevant village agreement.

Co-development of agreements is central to this program, alongside regular discussion and adaptation. This requires regular meetings with relevant stakeholders and joint discussion of any necessary amendments to agreements—in the sites we work in, we have at least two review meetings annually with the village leadership and wider public, internal meetings to discuss feedback, and an annual revision and renewal of the agreements.

3.3 | Impacts

CCT and/or CCT+ programs are currently running in 16 villages in Tanzania and 5 in Kenya, while the model has also been adopted in other countries such as Mozambique. Across these diverse contexts, they are yielding several positive outcomes. Both CCT and CCT+ have provided significant community benefits such as improved access to healthcare, education, and veterinary services: in one village, leaders noted that wildlife presence was now seen as the main driver of community development. Critically—and particularly due to the co-development of the program—it increased community engagement and a sense of ownership in conservation efforts. Because camera-trap images were shown at "film nights" in the villages, this generated real interest in wildlife and its conservation on village land. Behavior change has also been observed, particularly through CCT+, with communities actively reinforcing livestock enclosures, promptly reporting conflict incidents, and reducing retaliatory poisoning events.

Importantly, this has led to improved attitudes and tolerance towards wildlife. For example, rather than burning out wild dog dens on village land, villagers recognized that placing camera-traps there generated many points, so they became local assets. Similarly, villagers have tolerated the presence of breeding groups of lions on village land, and even insisted on the release of a pangolin trapped and brought into the village center for sale, as it was the species that generated most points on the camera-traps. The latter example is of particular interest because selling the pangolin would have generated significant funds for one individual, but releasing the pangolin could potentially bring benefits to the village as a whole. We have found increased detections of large carnivores on camera-traps, and there has been an improvement in local attitudes towards wildlife and recognition of benefits associated with wildlife on village land since the inception of CCT in 2015 (Figure 4).

Externally, some fears have been raised about whether the competitive element of the program causes tensions between villages or exacerbates any underlying disputes. That would certainly be possible and should be a key consideration in areas

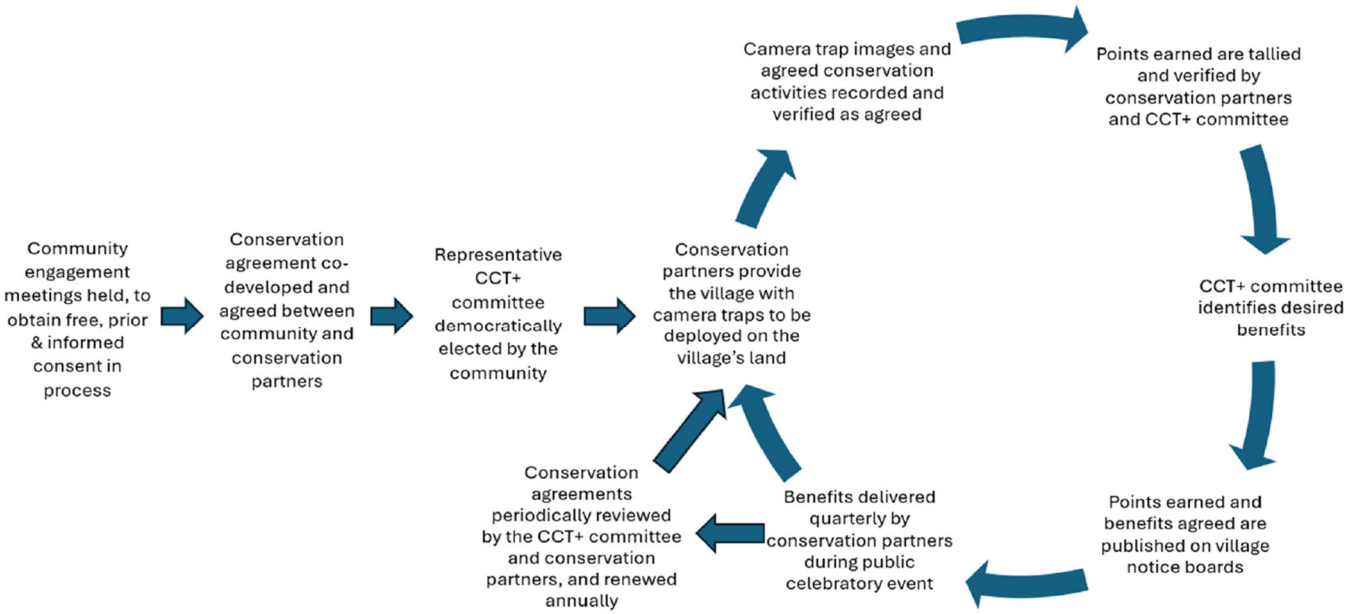

FIGURE 3 | Flowchart showing the core processes in the CCT+ program.

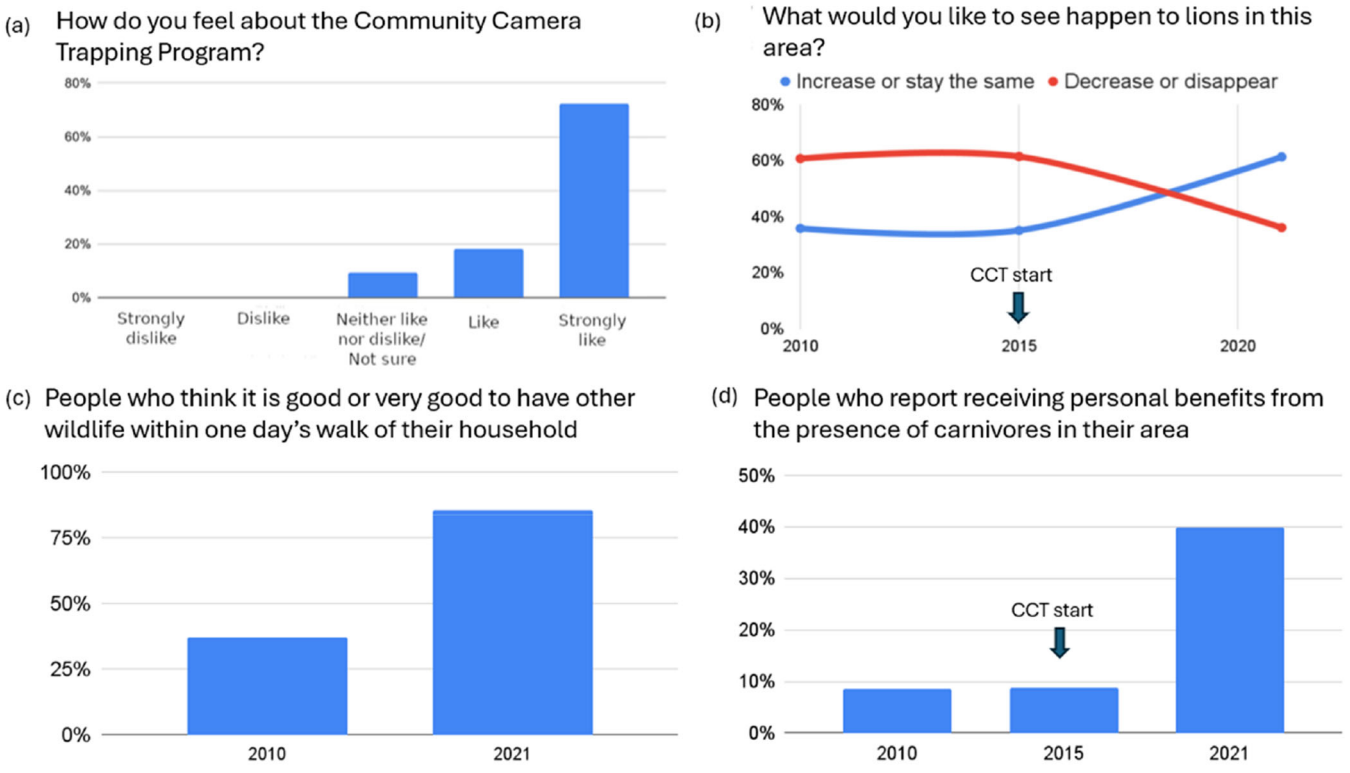

FIGURE 4 | Results from local household surveys showing (a) reported local feelings about the CCT program; (b) changes in desire over time regarding local lion numbers; (c) perceptions of local wildlife presence; and (d) recognition of personal benefits from local carnivore presence.

with existing tensions between villages. However, this has not been something we have seen to date: in the landscapes where we are running these programs, we have not had any major negative impacts reported due to competition between villages. The only issue has been that sometimes, villagers report that poachers detected in their village are not resident but are coming in from nearby villages, so people are concerned that they may incur penalties due to people they have little control over. Due to this concern, the CCT+ agreements included support for the village natural resource committee to help them with monitoring and patrolling their land.

These programs have generated considerable interest, and we established a "Coalition of Conservation Performance Payments" to discuss lessons learned and see how this model, or other similar ones, could be adapted elsewhere. So far,

CCT/CCT+ has been implemented in multiple countries and contexts, all with important positive impacts.

3.4 | Challenges and Considerations

While CCT and CCT+ programs have been successful in improving human–wildlife coexistence, they have also presented challenges. Finding the right unit of local governance at which to work can be challenging. Implementing the program at the village level helps build grassroots ownership and agency but, as noted above, there is a risk of intensifying any underlying tensions due to competition between villages. Ensuring equitable benefit distribution has also been challenging, with the risk of benefits being disproportionately captured by elite groups. Additionally, promoting the reduction of poaching without assuming an enforcement role has required careful navigation to avoid inadvertently becoming part of the enforcement process and undermining community trust.

Despite efforts to ensure transparency and accountability, benefit misappropriation is always a risk, highlighting the need for ongoing monitoring, robust and transparent accountability mechanisms, and where necessary, strengthening of local governance processes. Conflicts between villages, such as disputes over camera trap positioning and suspicions of theft, have sometimes arisen, necessitating effective conflict resolution mechanisms.

When certain actions such as snaring and poisoning incur penalties, individuals within a community may continue these activities discreetly to avoid repercussions. This hinders accurate monitoring and response, so conservation agreements need to be carefully structured to ensure transparent reporting. For example, the penalty for events such as poisonings is significantly lower if they are reported within 24 h: this encourages transparency and also may enable rapid-response action to be taken to reduce harm to wildlife.

Agreements should also be carefully structured, so those groups more likely to incur penalties are also those most likely to generate benefits. For example, if pastoralists are the group most associated with retaliatory killings (and therefore penalties), then they should also be the ones who can generate community benefits by reinforcing livestock enclosures. This reduces the risk of certain groups being seen as "troublemakers," which could otherwise lead to or intensify social conflict and exclusion.

Clearly, this kind of program incurs costs. Operational expenses will vary substantially depending on socioeconomic dynamics in each target landscape, and though this model could be applied in many areas, it is harder for the program to provide significant local benefits in richer areas. In Tanzania, annual costs for running CCT for a group of four villages, including providing benefits and employing staff, is approximately US$40,000, though there are some efficiencies of scale as more groups of villages enroll.

The price-point at which engagement is worthwhile for a village is also a challenge for a conservation organization to gauge. With limited funds, there is a constant trade-off between giving greater benefits to fewer people or smaller benefits to more people. Also, as benefits go to the village, it does not address the issue that costs of wildlife presence are still felt at the personal or household level and will often not be outweighed by community benefits. This is why building in elements of reducing household-level risk (such as reinforcing enclosures) is important. There is also a risk that if people have to spend less of their money on things like veterinary medicine it could incentivize the purchase of more livestock, which could amplify conflict and environmental harms.

It is also important to consider financial sustainability: currently, the CCT and CCT+ programs here are reliant upon external philanthropy, and some concerns have been raised about the sustainability of this. However, we have found that philanthropic funding for conservation has often proved more reliable than other forms of revenue, such as tourism, which can be strongly affected by geopolitical factors (COVID-19 being a particularly clear example). Nevertheless, it is beneficial to have multiple funding sources, so we are examining whether these community agreements and actions could form the basis of novel financial revenue streams, such as wildlife bonds and "custodian credits." These approaches could also be included within other financing models, such as public–private partnerships, to increase long-term resilience. Regardless of which model is used, it is important to consider likely funding sustainability, and to be very clear with local communities about the risks and opportunities, as a sudden lack of funds may halt the program and cause local anger, potentially intensifying conflict and distrust of conservation organizations.

4 | Discussion

Escalating conflicts between humans and big cats, fueled by habitat loss and competition for resources, necessitates innovative solutions that address both conservation and human well-being (IUCN 2023). The Community Camera Trapping (CCT) and CCT+ programs offer a community-centric approach to HWC management, focusing on empowering local communities and fostering coexistence.

The success of CCT and CCT+ highlights the power of community-driven conservation and the importance of addressing both ecological and social dimensions of HWC (Dickman 2010; Hazzah et al. 2014; IUCN 2023). By empowering communities, providing them with tangible benefits, and equipping them with the tools and knowledge to manage conflict, these programs offer a pathway towards a future where communities take ownership of conservation efforts with improved outcomes for both humans and wildlife. One particular benefit of the CCT and CCT+ programs is that they do not rely on communities having resource rights over wildlife: benefits are generated by wildlife presence and human behaviors. This is important in many areas where communities may not own the wildlife that they live alongside.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge the potential pitfalls and ethical considerations associated with such programs. Over-reliance on donor funding can create unsustainable dependencies, while competition between communities, though potentially beneficial, can also lead to unintended conflicts.

Furthermore, careful consideration must be given to the ethical implications of tying benefits and payments to conservation outcomes in economically vulnerable communities. While CCT+ aims to be additive and ensure that communities do not experience financial or material losses, it is essential to continually assess the potential for inadvertently reinforcing inequalities or creating unintended pressures.

The scalability and adaptability of the CCT/CCT+ approaches present exciting opportunities for broader application across diverse species and landscapes, and it has already been adapted for use across multiple species and contexts. This innovative approach has the potential to transform HWC management by aligning conservation goals with local development, improving long-term sustainability.

5 | Conclusion

In conflict situations, the local costs of living with wildlife species such as big cats are often much greater than associated benefits. As long as the considerations discussed in this paper are taken into account (Appendix 1), CCT and CCT+ represent potentially valuable ways of making wildlife presence a greater asset for communities. With its participatory monitoring linked to tangible benefits, CCT effectively creates value associated with the presence of big cats and other wildlife while CCT+ actively incentivizes wider conservation-friendly behaviors. Advancing and scaling up programs such as these should help enable a more resilient future for both people and wildlife.

Author Contributions

Amy Dickman: conceptualization (equal), funding acquisition (equal), methodology (equal), project administration (equal), resources (equal), writing – original draft (equal), writing – review and editing (equal). **Alayne Cotterill:** conceptualization (equal), data curation (equal), funding acquisition (equal), investigation (equal), methodology (equal), project administration (equal), supervision (equal), writing – original draft (equal), writing – review and editing (equal). **Stephano Asecheka:** conceptualization (equal), data curation (equal), methodology (equal), project administration (equal), resources (equal), writing – review and editing (equal). **Zainabu Mlaponi:** conceptualization (equal), data curation (equal), investigation (equal), methodology (equal), project administration (equal), resources (equal), writing – review and editing (equal). **Huruma Mbugi:** conceptualization (equal), data curation (equal), investigation (equal), methodology (equal), project administration (equal), resources (equal), writing – review and editing (equal). **Ana Grau:** conceptualization (equal), data curation (equal), formal analysis (equal), methodology (equal), project administration (equal), software (equal), writing – original draft (equal), writing – review and editing (equal). **Wiston Mtandamo:** investigation (equal), methodology (equal), project administration (equal), resources (equal), writing – review and editing (equal). **Gabriel Nyausi:** investigation (equal), methodology (equal), project administration (equal), resources (equal), writing – review and editing (equal). **BenJee Cascio:** conceptualization (equal), data curation (equal), formal analysis (equal), investigation (equal), methodology (equal), project administration (equal), resources (equal), writing – original draft (equal), writing – review and editing (equal).

Acknowledgments

We acknowledge all the field stall and local communities who enabled this study, and the Niassa Carnivore Project for sharing expertise around their conservation contracts. Before data collection, research design and data collection protocols were approved by the Tanzania Commission on Science and Technology (Permit numbers: 2012-60-ER-97-20, 2013-60-ER-97-20, 2014-280-ER-97-20, and 2016-23-ER-97-20) and Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute.

Ethics Statement

Permission to conduct research was granted by National, Regional, District-level, and Village-level authorities. The research design and field research teams were attentive to recognized codes of ethical conduct (AAA 2012; Brittain et al. 2020). Informed consent was given by all survey and interview participants.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability Statement

Data are stored within Lion Landscapes systems, and would be made available to any interested collaborators. They are also shared with national authorities in line with our permits.

References

Brittain, S., H. Ibbett, E. de Lange, et al. 2020. "Ethical Considerations When Conservation Research Involves People." *Conservation Biology* 34, no. 4: 925–933.

Cavalcanti, S. M. C., P. G. Crawshaw, and F. R. Tortato. 2012. "Use of Electric Fencing and Associated Measures as Deterrents to Jaguar Predation on Cattle in the Pantanal of Brazil." In *Fencing for Conservation*, edited by M. J. Somers and M. W. Hayward, 295–309. Springer.

Dickman, A. J. 2010. "Complexities of Conflict: The Importance of Considering Social Factors for Effectively Resolving Human–Wildlife Conflict." *Animal Conservation* 13, no. 5: 458–466.

Hazzah, L., S. Dolrenry, L. Naughton, et al. 2014. "Efficacy of Two Lion Conservation Programs in Maasailand, Kenya." *Conservation Biology* 28: 851–860.

Inskip, C., and A. Zimmermann. 2009. "Human-Felid Conflict: A Review of Patterns and Priorities Worldwide." *Oryx* 43: 18–34.

IUCN. 2023. *IUCN SSC Guidelines on Human-Wildlife Conflict and Coexistence*. 1st ed. IUCN. https://www.hwctf.org/guidelines.

Khorozyan, I., and M. Waltert. 2021. "A Global View on Evidence-Based Effectiveness of Interventions Used to Protect Livestock From Wild Cats." *Conservation Science and Practice* 3, no. 2: e317.

Lichtenfeld, L. L., C. Trout, and E. L. Kisimir. 2015. "Evidence-Based Conservation: Predator-Proof Bomas Protect Livestock and Lions." *Biodiversity and Conservation* 24: 483–491.

Loveridge, A. J., S. W. Wang, L. G. Frank, and J. Seidensticker. 2010. "People and Wild Felids: Conservation of Cats and Management of Conflicts." In *Biology and Conservation of Wild Felids*, edited by D. W. Macdonald and A. J. Loveridge, 161–195. Oxford University Press.

Marker, L. 2000. "Donkeys Protecting Livestock in Namibia." *Carnivore Damage Prevention News* 2: 7–8.

Woodroffe, R., and L. G. Frank. 2005. "Lethal Control of African Lions (*Panthera leo*): Local and Regional Population Impacts." *Animal Conservation* 8, no.1: 91–98.

Appendix 1

Some of the Key Considerations When Designing a CCT/CCT+ Program

Category	Key considerations
Community Engagement and Trust Building	Understand community perceptions towards wildlife and conservation: This includes previous experience with wildlife and conservation projects.
	Understand needs: Make sure time is taken to understand the actual community needs and desires rather than perceived or assumed needs.
	Ensure inclusivity: Involve diverse groups (pastoralists, marginalized tribes, women, youth) in program design and implementation, and take time to consider how these different groups experience wildlife costs and potential benefits.
	Understand barriers to change: These will not always be immediately obvious, are likely to include diverse cultural, economic, social factors, and are likely only to emerge over time.
	Proceed at the right pace: Often building trust and a proper understanding of the local context takes time and many meetings. It is critical to take the necessary time to do this.
	Identify traditional leadership systems and work with them as much as possible so they feel ownership.
	Involve community partners in the development of the program from the start to ensure a deep understanding and wider ownership.
Conservation Agreement Development	Determine appropriate unit: Consider the appropriate scale for inclusion (e.g., individual village vs. wider communities), weighing budgetary and social factors.
	Understand and respect local rights: Establish an understanding of local rights and agency over both land tenure and wildlife ownership/use.
	Maintain transparency: Discuss, agree and communicate program goals, metrics, and intended benefit distribution clearly.
	Clearly define actions: Work with the relevant communities to clearly define agreed conservation-positive and conservation-negative actions, and the appropriate scale of reward or penalty, though make clear there will be space for adaptation over time.
Program Implementation	Ensure accurate monitoring: Implement robust systems for necessary data collection and verification for all the agreed metrics.
	Address illegal activities: Promote poaching reduction without assuming an enforcement role, use pre-existing structures and groups to take on this role.
	Resolve conflicts: Develop mechanisms to address disputes between villages or community members.
	Adapt to community needs: Maintain flexibility to address evolving community requests.
Equitable Benefit Sharing	Prevent elite capture: Ensure benefits reach all segments of the community, create built in mechanisms that emphasize transparency and inclusion (e.g., representative and diverse committees).
	Maintain transparency and accountability: Prevent benefit misappropriation through clear distribution mechanisms and accountability.
Financial Sustainability	Secure diverse funding: Explore options beyond donor funding to ensure long-term sustainability.
	Look for synergies: Work with other organizations delivering benefits to the same communities to see if it is possible to channel those funds through the CCT+ mechanism.